LORD ARTHUR'S BED

A Play for the Stage by Martin Lewton

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LORD ARTHUR'S BED by Martin Lewton

(based on real historical events c 1870)

First performed at the Friends Meeting House as part of the Brighton Fringe Festival 14th May 2008, prior to a national tour

CAST

JIM	**Paul Spruce**
DONALD	**Paul Kendrick**
Directed by	**Martin Lewton**
Script Advisor	**Andrew McKinnon**

Second production: New Theatre Dublin as part of the Absolut Dublin Gay Theatre Festival.

CAST

JIM	**Paul Spruce**
DONALD	**Spencer Charles Noll**
Directed by	**Martin Lewton**
Script Advisor	**Andrew McKinnon**

SCENE ONE

(A DOUBLE BED)

(IT IS 2009)

(AS THE AUDIENCE ENTER JIM AND DONALD, SMARTLY DRESSED YOUNG MEN, ARE LYING ON THE BED. DONALD IS 21 JIM IS 30 MODERN MUSIC IS PLAYING)

(THE MUSIC CHANGES: STRAVINSKY'S PULCINELLA USED THROUGHOUT THE PLAY)

(LIGHTS UP. THEY START PREPARING FOR THE PLAY. THEY COME FORWARD)

JIM — You start. No surprises

DONALD — I don't like surprises.

JIM — Huh

DONALD — We could start with Socrates.

JIM — Socrates?!

DONALD — Finish with him then.

JIM — It's a long way to the finish. Just tell them about us. What this is about. And then the story

DONALD — Okay. Right here goes. Work in the City. Life's not fuckin bad. Gay life I mean. Not that you mention being queer at work. Oh they know. The straights. Two gay boys snigger snigger. Well fuck them. We ent got the mortgage and the

wife and the kids and the school fees. We got the pink pound.

JIM Too fuckin right.

DONALD We spend our cash how we want, in the bars and clubs and the saunas and the beach and its fucking good. And we go out on the streets and sometimes we feel like fuckin kings.

JIM Or fuckin queens.

DONALD Fuck you. Gay life is good. So there we are having the time of our lives, two fucking gay boys having the time of their fucking lives and we go and fall in love.

JIM So this is 2009 right. Fuckin Civil Partnership, the fuckin works. Even some of the guys from work came: the ones we could trust not to tell the fucking bosses. An Dons mam, not mine, just me fuckin Auntie Rennee. She's seen a programme on the telly says poofs are no different to you and me. We're on top of the fuckin world, having the time of our fucking lives.

DONALD So we move into this apartment right right, in this amazing fucking house, cost a fortune. Cos we've got a bob or too, or Jim has cos he's so fuckin old.

JIM Piss off.

DONALD We move into this house and that's when it all started .

JIM It had been a Lords House you see. Lord Arthur Clinton, some Victorian poof.

DONALD And I surfed the the web, sent off for books, went to the Record Office finding out more about the history. And the story, of Lord Arthur, and Fanny and Stella, it sort of took us over..

JIM Took you over, you mean.

DONALD …and we sort of became addicted . And then it kind of affected us…..

JIM It's done that alright.

DONALD ..and we need to talk to someone and that's where you come in you see. That's who you are. Our webcam.

JIM Our fucking webcam.

DONALD We need to tell someone We need to talk.

JIM We need to talk

DONALD It started with the bed.

(DONALD JUMPS ON TO THE BED)

DONALD It was our wedding night,

JIM One year ago today

DONALD And we was thinking about doing the business…

JIM Just for once

DONALD I didn't say that.

JIM Thinking it though, eh?

DONALD We was on the bed

(DONALD GETS ON ALL FOURS ON THE BED AND JIM MIMES FUCKING HIM FROM BEHIND)

JIM Fucking in milord's bedroom

DONALD We didn't know that then

JIM You alright with this. We're only miming. Just showing you what happened.. And this is just part of it, we do do

other stuff. Gay boys. Ya know. We don't just shove it up the arse. Sorry.You're embarrassed now.

DONALD So there we were christening the bed…….

JIM When the fucking thing only went and collapsed.

(JIM PUSHES DONALD OFF THE BED)

JIM Straight through the fucking floor boards.

DONALD And there, under the floor boards was this tiny card. Ancient tiny calling card. And printed in gold lettering were the words Lady Arthur Clinton.

DONALD And that's where it all began. With a double wedding.

JIM **THE MARRIAGE**

DONALD The marriage of Mr James Damien Forsyth

JIM To Mr Donald Gervais Burrell.

DONALD That's me.

JIM Gervais. Fucking hell, Ill never get used to that. Gervais!

(DONALD TAKES HIS WEDDING RING OFF)

DONALD I give you this ring as a symbol of our love and commitment as we form a civil partnership and I call upon these persons here present to witness that I Donald do take you James to be my lifelong partner.

(DONALD PUTS THE RING ON JIM'S FINGER)

JIM And Lord Arthur Pelham Clinton, third son of the Duke of Newcastle, Conservative member of Parliament to

DONALD Miss Stella Ernestine Boulton

JIM — Beloved daughter of Mr and Mrs Fuck Knows Who Boulton.

(JIM ADOPTS THE POSTURE OF LORD ARTHUR. DONALD AS STELLA)

(ARTHUR PUTS THE RING BACK ON STELLA'S FINGER)

ARTHUR — With this ring I thee wed, with my body I thee cherish and with all my worldly goods I thee endow.

STELLA — Oh you are a dear. You are my impossible darling

ARTHUR — How so dearest?

STELLA — You want me all to yourself.

ARTHUR — But you are mine now.

STELLA — Oh Arthur I'll never be part of your world.

ARTHUR — Then my world can go hang.

(THEY EMBRACE DRAMATICALLY)

ARTHUR — I've had calling cards printed for you.

(HE PRODUCES AN IMAGINARY CARD)

STELLA — (READING) Lady Arthur Clinton.

(SHE HUGS THE CARD TO HER)

Stella. Lady Arthur Clinton.

DONALD — But my lady was closely observed by the maid.

JIM — **THE MAID**

(THE MAID KNEELS AND TRIES TO STOP GIGGLING)

MAID (JIM) I beg pardon madam, if I might say something mam.

STELLA Maria?

MAID Beg your pardon mam, honest I do mam, but, I don't know how to say this mam, but….

STELLA Cat got your tongue?

MAID I…

STELLA Spit it out girl.

MAID ……I really think you are a man.

STELLA I am Stella. Lady Arthur Clinton girl, Lord Arthur's wife.

MAID Yes mam, anything you say mam.

STELLA I have a ring to prove it.

(SHE SHOWS THE RING)

MAID Yes mam Beg pardon mam.

(THE MAID CAN'T CONTROL HERSELF AND TURNS AWAY)

STELLA Little trollop. I don't have to put up with this you know! Do you hear me Arthur? Do you hear? Oh damn your bourgeous little world.

(JIM TURNS BACK)

JIM Nor did she. For she had other fish to fry.

DONALD **STELLA'S OTHER SUITORS**

JIM Witness John Safford Fiske. United States Consul to Scotland.

FISKE (JIM)	My darling Ernie. Louis tells me that you are living in drag. What a wonderful child it is! I have three minds to come to London and see your magnificence with my own eyes. Would you welcome me.? Probably it is better that I should stay at home and dream of you.
DONALD	And then there was Fanny
	(JIM IS FANNY)
DONALD	Companion in drag. Sister , lover, confidante and friend……
	(THEY EMBRACE AND SIT)
DONALD	**THE LETTERS**
	(THEY MIME LETTER WRITING)
DONALD	From Fanny (Frederick) to their mutual friend Lord Arthur
	(JIM READS THE LETTER AS FANNY)
FANNY	My dearest Arthur - You must excuse me from interfering in matrimonial squabbles As to all the things Stella said to you the other night, she may have been tight, and did not know all she was saying, so that by the time you get my answer you will both be laughing over the whole affair. Ever yours, Fan.
STELLA	My dear Arthur - I have waited two hours for you, and do not like to be treated with such rudeness-Yours, Ernest Boulton
STELLA	P.S.I am consoling myself in your absence by getting screwed.
JIM	(Pissed: screwed meant pissed)
	(JIM STANDS)

STELLA — My dearest Arthur - I am just off to Chelmsford with Fanny…We are going to a party tomorrow. Send me some money, wretch. Stella Clinton

ARTHUR — She called me a wretch!

DONALD — Witness Francis Kegan Cox. City businessman

COX (JIM) — I am attracted to Boulton, despite the fact that he is dressed in man's clothes. I am firmlyof the opinion that he is a woman.

(ERNEST FLIRTS WITH COX ON THE BED)

ERNEST — Oh Francis, you City birds have such good fun in your offices, with your oysters and your champagne.

(ERNEST RUNS HIS FINGERS UP AND DOWN COX)

COX — My dearest…may I call you Stella?

STELLA — Hush.

(ERNEST KISSES COX. HE RESPONDS)

COX — Does not your friend object to my attentions?

ERNEST — Arthur? Oh no, we have an understanding.

(ERNEST BECOMES MORE PASSIONATE WITH COX THEN PUSHES HIM OUT OF THE WAY.)

ERNEST — I feel a bit chilly now Francis, my love.

COX — Let me warm you my dear.

(HE PUTS A CLOTH OVER ERNEST'S LEGS)

DONALD — A Picture in The Illustrated Police News May 1870. A gentlemen's delicate attention to Boulton.

(THEY STRIKE A POSE)

JIM	Unusual interests, the London police.
ERNEST	(LOOKING OVER HIS SHOULDER FOR ARTHUR)
	Take this my darling
	(HE MIMES GIVING HIM A PHOTOGRAPH)
ERNEST	Keep it always.
	(COX EXITS)
ERNEST	Oh Francis
JIM	Arthur returns
	(JIM AS ARTHUR)
ARTHUR	Has the fellow gone?
ERNEST	Don't be cross with me Arthur dear. He really thought I was a woman. Wait until he finds out!
	(ARTHUR LEAVES AND JIM RETURNS AS COX)
JIM	Cox returns.
	(ERNEST WATCHES HIM. COX STARES AT HIM)
	(COX GRABS ERNEST'S CROTCH)
COX	You damned infernal scoundrel, you deserve a good kicking for this!
	(JIM KNOCKS DONALD TO THE FLOOR WITH MORE PASSION NECESSARY THAN FOR THE TELLING OF THE STORY)
DONALD	Careful
JIM	Fuck

(DONALD GETS UP SLOWLY.)

DONALD What is the fuckin matter with you?

(SILENCE)

DONALD Jim

JIM Boat Race

(DONALD STARES AT HIM THEN CARRIES ON)

DONALD **A DAY OUT AT THE BOAT RACE**

JIM It was the first thing he found out about Fanny and Stella

DONALD Cruising down the river on a Sunday Afternoon

JIM Saturday. The Boat Race is on Saturday.

DONALD The swish of water on wood

JIM The muscular motion of the oars

(THEY SIT ON THE BED ENERGETICALLY ROWING WITH JIM BEHIND ARTHUR)

DONALD In out in out……

JIM In out in out…

(JIM HOLDS DONALD ROUND THE WAIST. DONALD GRABS DONALDS HAND AND PULLS IT DOWN TO HIS CROTCH HALF TURNING TO KISS HIM)

(JIM JUMPS UP)

JIM They didn't go on the river.

DONALD How do you know?

JIM Fanny, Stella…you don't even know Arthur was there….

DONALD Great

JIM Picnic. They had a picnic on the bank.

DONALD Why are you so fuckin picky?

JIM I'm not being picky Donald.

DONALD They had a *picnic*. On the bank.

(HE GLARES AT JIM)

JIM After the Boat Race comes

DONALD **THE BALL**

(MUSIC)

JIM Haxells Ball at the Royal Exeter Hotel on the Strand hosted by Mr Amos Westrop Gibbings.

(GIBBINGS STEPS FORWARD VERY EFFEMINATE WITH A LISP BUT CHARISMATIC)

GIBBINGS (JIM) The men all go in drag, which means men wearing women's costumes.

(HE DANCES WITH DONALD(STELLA))

GIBBINGS Of course going about in drag is a perfectly harmless pastime. We are all from good families. Ernest is the son of a stockbroker. Freddy of a judge . Despite the splendid acting every gentlemen at the ball knows that the young men in female attire are really men.. Even the servants are in on the joke. A bit of harmless fun. There is not the slightest suggestion of impropriety. If there were to be Mr Haxell would have us all turned out in a trice.

(THEY STOP DANCING)

GIBBINGS — It was a magical evening. And when dear Stella sang she sang so very charmingly.

(SINGING)

JIM — **MEN IN PETTICOATS**

(JIM READS IN A YORKSHIRE ACCENT)

MAN — Men in Petticoats. I have been a corset wearer for some time past, and have never regretted having become one. Until quite lately I did not take to tight lacing, as my wife told me the consequences would be dreadful, but I think the feeling is something delightful. I always wear under my stays a lady's vest, chemise and knickers, and of course stockings below. Whenever an opportunity presents itself in the privacy of my own home, I don female attire. In order to gratify my wish, I have a complete lady's wardrobe of my own own, of which I am very particular, especially of my underclothing, which I cannot have too nice. I can assure you that if the law did not prohibit it, I should cast aside my own uncomfortable garments and adopt that of petticoats. Am I alone in my ideas? How many other men delight in women's dress?

(SINGING)

DONALD — A bit of harmless fun or the sins of the cities of the plain?

JIM — **THE SINS OF THE CITIES OF THE PLAIN**

JIM — Witness Jack Saul. Prostitute and writer. Confessions of a Mary Ann.

(DONALD AND JIM GO TO THE FRONT OF THE STAGE)

DONALD Lord Arthur and Boulton, whom he addressed as Stella, were standing before a large mirror. He had his arm round her waist,

(DONALD GRABS JIMS ARM AND PUTS IT AROUND HIS WAIST)

He had his arm around her waist and every now and then drew Stella's lips to his for a long luscious kiss.

(JIM PECKS DONALD ON THE CHEEK)

His inamorata was not idle, for I could see her unbuttoning his trouser, and soon she let out a beautiful specimen of the *arbour vitse* , at least nine inches long and very thick.

(DONALD GOES FOR JIM'S TROUSERS)

JIM Get off.

DONALD It was in glorious condition, with a great, glowing red head. Stella at once knelt down and kissed this jewel of love and would, I believe, have sucked him to a spend, but Lord Arthur was too impatient, and he raised his companion from her stooping posture…….

(DONALD RAISES HIMSELF UP)

passing his hands under Stella's clothes. She gave a very pretty scream (SHE SCREAMS) and pretended to be shocked at this rudeness, and next he turned everything up and tossed her on the bed.

(DONALD WAITS FOR JIM BUT THEN, AS STELLA PERFORMS A SPECTACULAR LEAP BACKWARDS ON TO THE BED)

(JIM'S FACE CRACKS AND HE GOES TO HIM)

JIM You're fucking mad you are.

DONALD

As yet there was nothing to see but a beautiful pair of legs enveloped within lovely knicker-bocker drawers. These were prettily trimmed with the finest lace, and I could also see pink silk stockings and the most fascinating little shoes with silver buckles.

(JIM JOINS IN)

JIM

His Lordship quickly opened Stella's thighs, and, putting his hand into her drawers, soon brought to light as manly a weapon as any lady could desire to see,

(JIM USES HIS ARM UNDER THE COVER TO DEMONSTRATE)

and very different from the crinkum-crankum one usually expects to find when one throws up a ladies petticoats and proceeds to take liberties with her. "What's this beautiful plaything, Stella darling? Are you an hermaphrodite, my love? Oh, I must kiss it: it's such a treasure! Will it spend like a man's love? He fondled and caressed Boulton's prick passing his hand up and down the ivory-white shaft and kissing the dark, ruby coloured head every time it was uncovered.

(LORD ARTHUR STICKS HIS HEAD UNDER THE COVER)

DONALD

Stella was greatly agitated. His Lordship's eyes almost emitted sparks as the crisis seemed to come, and he must have swallowed every drop of the creamy emission he had worked so hard to obtain.

JIM

At once he presented his prick to Boulton's fundament.,

(HE JUMPS UP FROM THE BED, TURNS STELLA ROUND AND THROWS HER LEGS OVER HIS SHOULDERS)

as he held the two cheeks of his pretty arse open with his hands. He soon commenced a proper bottom fuck, which both of them gave signs of enjoying intensely, for I could fairly hear his belly flop against Boulton's buttocks at every home push, whilst each of them called the other by the most endearing terms

(THEY ARE FUCKING AWAY)

ARTHUR "Oh Stella, Stella, what a darling you are! Tell me love that you love me! Tell me it's a nice fuck!"

STELLA And then the other would exclaim:"tush; push; fuck me; ram your darling prick in as fast as it will go! oh! oh! oh! quicker,quicker; do come now, dearest Arthur; my love, my pet! oh! oh!! oh!!!

(THEY COLLAPSE ON TOP OF EACH OTHER LAUGHING)

(DONALD KISSES JIM. HE PULLS AWAY)

DONALD Don't stop.

JIM Not with the skirt okay?

DONALD Okay.

JIM It's tacky. It's stupid. Not with the skirt.

DONALD It's only a sheet

(DONALD TAKES THE "SKIRT" OFF)

DONALD Now?

(JIM SHAKES HIS HEAD)

JIM Let's do this properly

DONALD You want it properly we'll do it properly.

JIM It's not about us. It's about…….

(DONALD STARES AT JIM)

DONALD We'll fuckin do it properly then..

(DONALD TURNS AWAY AWAY)

JIM **JIM**

JIM I don't want to wear dresses or make up or pink girls' knickers.
Don't want to have sex in saunas an lay bys an lavvies
Don't want to be a master.
Don't want to be a slave.
Don't want to hide who I am
Don't want to tell anyone
Don't want to be different
Don't want to pretend at work
Want to melt into the crowd. Be part of the sexless mass
Want to have children.
Want to not have children
I want my mother to come to my funeral
Don't want to catch men's eyes in the street
Don't want pity
Don't want understanding
Could do without hatred
Don't want to be a Nancy boy. Don't want to be a Mary Ann
Don't want to be the gay on Gaydar
Don't want to be gay.
Don't want to be straight.
Don't want to feel dirty
Don't want to feel clean
Want to be wanted
Don't need Pride
Don't need anything
Don't want to be different
I want to be the same.

(JIM TURNS AWAY

(MUSIC)

(DONALD PRODUCES A HOOP, DRESS, HAT AND FEATHER BOA FROM BEHIND THE BED AND LAYS THEM OUT. HE STRIPS NAKED WITH HIS BACK TO US, THEN PUTS THEM ON)

(HE COMES FORWARD AS STELLA AND SITS)

STELLA I love to look like a girl and be thought one. I had such a lark the other day with a beautiful milliner at Richmond. He was a lovely creature nearly six feet high but thin and beautifully proportioned, with dark brown hair, deep green eyes, and such a lovely white skin. His mouth was almost always on the smile, showing a lovely set of pearly teeth with which I was so much in love that I wanted to make him take my cock between his lips…….

Having elicited that he was not particularly busy, we sat chatting for some time about the fashion and trimmings, and things of such nature, for I am as well up in all that as any lady in England.

Then our lips joined in such a long-drawn kiss… and taking advantage of his confusion, I soon had one hand opening his pants. I slipped my trembling fingers into the thatch of his love and before he could help himself my head was buried in his trousers. But I was a lady and not a man, so there could be no harm in it, as he afterwards told me.

I pretended to resist his attempts to get at my cunny, and at last blushingly told him that I was one of the unfortunate beings(which perhaps he had heard of) who had a malformation, something like the male instrument - in fact it was capable of stiffening, and always did so under excitement, exactly as a man's would do. But darling, I said, it is quite harmless and can do no mischief like the real male affair

I must confess I have often wanted to feel what a man is like, says I, and you can oblige me without any risk if you will… He had it in his mouth directly….I jumped up and asked him to lie back on the sofa….his hand kept hold of my prick and directed it to the mouth of his mancunt himself…. By heavens! He was a virgin, and so tight!...he fairly screamed with pain and tried to shove me away.. but t the crisis came….my John Thomas fairly crashed through all the defences of his tortured arsehole, leaving nothing but a bloody wreck behind as I went in up to the hilt…

He did not scream, but giving one long, deep-drawn sigh, fairly swooned away under me. In about five minutes he opened his eyes:
"Oh dearest, what a dream!, he sighed, I dreamt I was smashed to atoms; then my soul soared away to heaven, and I have been in Paradise, tasting such exquisite sweets, such thrills of love, and now I wake up to find it is you, darling, and that dear thing of yours that gives me such pleasure..

But you are not a man, are you darling? You can't do me any harm can you? Do tell me that love, and I shall be happy; otherwise I should tear myself from your arms and run screaming from this place!

How beautiful he looked. How could I undeceive him, so I glued my lips to his, as I murmured: No, darling: I'm not a man. I can't hurt, my love! I can't hurt you…….

(STELLA STANDS. DONALD TAKES OFF THE HAT AND THE BOA AND WAITS FOR JIM)

(JIM RETURNS)

(SILENCE)

JIM For someone who doesn't like surprises you're pretty good at dishing them up.

DONALD Love me.

JIM The dress. Where did you get it?

DONALD I'm asking you to fuck me

JIM Like this? Dressed like this? You never said. You never fucking said!

(HE WALKS AWAY)

DONALD **THE ARREST**

(JIM STOPS IN HIS TRACKS, TURNS AND COMES DOWNSTAGE)

JIM 22nd April 1870 Fanny and Stella are arrested at the Strand Theatre. They had visited the Ladies Retiring Room.

DONALD Jim.

JIM Stella

STELLA Have you a ladies room?

ATTENDANT(J) Yes madam, walk this way.

(STELLA CROSSES TO HIM)

JIM (AS JIM) You're nicked

(HE MANHANDLES DONALD)

DONALD Get off me.

JIM — You're fuckin nicked.

DONALD — For what? Jim? You're hurting.

JIM — For deception. For lies. For pretending you're something you're not.

(THEY STARE AT EACH OTHER)

DONALD — Prove it.

(SILENCE)

(JIM LETS GO)

DONALD — **BOW STREET POLICE STATION**

AN ANAL EXAMINATION

POLICEMAN(J) — Remove your clothing Miss. You don't mind if I call you that?

(STELLA REMOVES HER CLOTHING. VERY SLOWLY.)

POLICEMAN — Item. One body and dress shirt of scarlet silk, three petticoats, one green gauze dress, one bodice, one pair of drawers and stockings sewn together, two bustles, one pair of bronze boots, one red flannel skirt, a quantity of wadding, taken from the breast…..

(STELLA HAS PEELED THE DRESS AND HOOP DOWN)

POLICEMAN — Item. One metal chain, four lockets, three bracelets, one finger-ring, one pair of earrings and one necklace, one wig, one plaited chignon.

(SHE LETS THEM DROP. SHE IS NAKED)

(THE POLICEMAN CROSSES TO HER)

POLICEMAN — Feel better now Miss. Sir

(SILENCE)

POLICEMAN Cat got your tongue, miss?

(SILENCE)

JIM What do you want Donald?

DONALD I want……to be different.

JIM Bend over.

(DONALD STARES AT HIM)

(DONALD BENDS OVER THE BED)

(JIM TURNS AWAY)

(HE TURNS BACK)

JIM Cover yourself up.

(HE THROWS THE DRESS AT DONALD)

JIM I want to be the same.

LIGHTS DOWN

SCENE TWO

(DONALD DRESSES THEN SITS AND MAKES HIMSELF UP.

(JIM CLEARS THE STAGE)

LIGHTS UP

DONALD **GOING OUT AS LADIES GOING OUT AS MEN**

DONALD The extent to which sodomy is carried on in London between gentlemen and young fellows is little dreamed of by the outside public.

(HE PUTS THE FINISHING TOUCHES TO HIS MAKE UP)

The increase of these monsters in the shape of men, commonly designated margeries, poofs and so on, of late years in the great Metropolis, renders it necessary for the safety of the public that they should be made known. Will the reader credit it, but such is nevertheless the fact, that these monsters actually walk the streets the same as whores, looking out for a chance!

JIM Brighton on a Friday night

DONALD Watcha big boy

JIM I liked you better in a frock.

DONALD I bet you did sailor

JIM Look if you want me to help you with this…..

DONALD You can help me anytime darling

JIM Oh fuck off.

(SILENCE)

JIM Just get on with it, okay?

DONALD The trial?

JIM **THE TRIAL**

(DONALD STANDS ON THE BED)

COURT OFFICIAL(DON) Regina vs Boulton,Ernest also known as Stella, Park, Frederick, also known as Fanny and others named in the Indictment. Before the Lord Chief Justice at Westminster Hall. May 1870 The Attorney General.

ATTORNEY GENERAL (JIM)

Milord. The Crown will show that the defendants and other persons mentioned in the indictment, and also, I regret to say, other persons whose names have not yet been discovered, associated together, spoke and wrote to each other, in such a manner as to indicate that relations subsisted between them such as are only permissible between men and women… …
that by sometimes dressing in female costume, sometimes in male costume , with a studied air of effeminacy, powdering their necks, painting their faces, by amatory airs and gestures, they endeavoured to excite each others' passions and to make themselves objects of desire to persons of their own class. That they slept together, that they lived together upon the terms of man and wife, or I should more properly say of lover and mistress, that they addressed each other in terms of endearment, such as men only address to women, and that they wrote to each other in the language of love, sometimes in that of violent passion, in short…they conspired for the purpose of the commission of unnatural offences.

OFFICIAL

Call the Beadle

JIM

UNNATURAL OFFENCES

(DONALD TURNS AWAY)

(JIM DRINKS)

JIM

I hate the power of sex
I'm scared of its filthy dirty corners
I love the dark
I'm filled with disgust at how unnatural it is to be natural
I'm afraid of the marriage bed.

(DON TURNS TO WATCH HIM)

I love the sauna
The casual sex in the public darkness
I love the dark
I hate the sauna
The piss yellow come in your face sauna

	The unnatural offence
	(DON WATCHES)
JIM	I want its power to end
	(HE DRINKS)
DONALD	Is that gin?
JIM	Have some lover…
DONALD	The play Jim
	(DONALD GOES TO TAKE JIM'S GLASS)
JIM	Don't.
	(SILENCE)
JIM	I'm okay. Go on. Do your theatricals. Tell your story. I'm okay.
	(HE PUTS THE GLASS DOWN)
	(HE GETS UP ON THE BED)
JIM	The Justice and the Beadle.
JUSTICE (JIM)	**GOINGS ON AT THE BURLINGTON ARCADE**
BEADLE(DON)	You don't just have to believe the Attorney General, sir. I seen them too.
	(THE BEADLE COMES FORWARD)
JUSTICE	Beadle?

BEADLE Men sir, dressed as women, sir Walking about as women looking over their shoulders as if enticing men Three or four men following them.
And another time surrounded by an angry mob who thought they was men.
And then going out as men:
With their faces and necks painted and powdered, low shirt collars and waistcoats open
Looking at people as they passed all feminine. Not masculine. Not masculine at all.

JUSTICE Carry on.

BEADLE I heard them make noises, noises with their lips. The same that I have heard made by females when passing gentlemen on the street.
Sometimes I thought they were women. Sometimes I thought they were men.
Whenever I have seen them their faces have been painted…

JUSTICE Painted you say?

BEADLE Painted very thickly with rouge your honour and everything else on. And that's not all sir they had no respect, no inkling of how gentlemen should behave.

JUSTICE They abused you sir?

BEADLE In a manner of speaking sir.

JUSTICE Go on.

BEADLE When I remonstrated with Boulton, your worship, his reply was most improper

JUSTICE Yes

BEADLE His exact words were "Oh, you sweet little dear"
I am not used to being spoken to like that your honour.

JUSTICE By another man?

BEADLE By anyone, sir.

JUSTICE	Stand down.
DONALD	**THE BUGGER**
JIM	There was an old person of Sark
DONALD	Who buggered a pig in the dark
JIM	The swine in surprise
DONALD	Murmured: "God blast your eyes",
JIM AND DONALD	Do you take me for Boulton and Park?
DONALD	Boom Boom
	(JIM STARES AT HIM)
DONALD	(TO JIM) Are you alright?
JIM	Super
DONALD	Me too. Don't drink so much, eh?
JUSTICE	Call the next witness
JIM	**THE LANDLADY**
LANDLADY(DONALD)	My name is Mrs Anne Empson. I run a respectable lodging house. I let the dressing room floor to Lord Arthur Clinton. He lodged there a fortnight. Whilst he was there, Boulton came there and had mutton chops, mutton chops… and bitter beer
COUNSEL(JIM)	Is he in this courtroom madam
	(THE LANDLADY POINTS)

LANDLADY That is the one, that is the one I have seen dressed as a woman. I examined Lord Arthur's drawers, as I saw him go on tip-toes to let that person out, he assured me that that person was a woman. I found Boulton's shirts there. I saw women's clothes in a cupboard in the back dressing room, .I saw Park only once at the Lodging, and I made him carry down a box. Park turned to me and I said, you have brought the boxes up and I will make you take them down, he turned round and said, I wish never to see your house again, and I replied, I'll take good care you don't. Before Lord Arthur left he represented Park as his cousin, and the night he was at the lodgings in women's clothes, he slept with Lord Arthur Clinton. Lord Arthur Clinton! Lord Arthur left because he owed me money for rent. I advanced him ten sovereigns, and Boulton has part of it. I stopped Lord Arthur's clothes for the rent. I stopped his clothes!!

JUSTICE It is no laughing matter gentlemen. I hope you will keep order.

LANDLADY Ooh yes tell them to keep order sir cos it was after I had purchased a bed for Lord Arthur's cousin that Boulton slept with Lord Arthur in the same bed, and I was surprised to see, surprised to see I was, that the bed I had bought was not slept in. Do you hear me, not slept in at all!!

JUSTICE For the defence. Mr Straight.

DONALD Mr Straight, you're making that up You taking the piss?

JIM That's what it says

DONALD If you say so

STRAIGHT Have you been drinking madam

LANDLADY Drinking ? Positively not.

STRAIGHT I see

LANDLADY Positively not young man.

STRAIGHT Are you married ?

LANDLADY Certainly not.

STRAIGHT It might have been an advantage for you

LANDLADY An advantage for me? Huh! Not if I had been married to Park or Boulton or any of that lot it wouldn't! Not if I'd been married to them!!

STRAIGHT And would you point out the defendants for us?

LANDLADY That's them over there

STRAIGHT Boulton?

LANDLADY That one. No that one!

STRAIGHT Park?

LANDLADY The other one! How should I know. Nancy boy toffs - all look the same to me!

STRAIGHT Thank you

LANDLADY I hope you're not implying nothing!

STRAIGHT Nothing at all, Miss. Kindly stand down.

LANDLADY Cos if you's implying nothing….!

STRAIGHT Thank you Miss.

DONALD Fuck me I'm knackered.

JIM Have a rest. It's your show buddy. Read them this

(HE HANDS HIM A PAPER)

DONALD What's this?

JIM The Times protecting our women folk.

DONALD I should think so to.

EDITOR(DON) The Times Newspaper would avoid any repetition of the filthy reports which on eight several mornings have been furnished to every London breakfast table and are particularly concerned for our female readers. Most cases of this sort bear their character marked on their foreheads. No woman can be in any danger of reading about them unless she does so intentionally. But the heading "Men in Women's Clothes" need not have served as an adequate warning of what was to follow and a lady may have been left to make out the underlying filth for herself, or have had to be warned of its existence by some male relative.

(JIM IS DRINKING)

JIM And all because they liked wearing frocks in plays. Where will it end?

(HE PRODS DONALD)

DONALD Fuck off

JIM A letter to The Times

JIM **SCHOOL PLAYS**

(DURING THIS SPEECH DONALD STARTS CUDDLING UP TO JIM)

JIM After being present at one of these school plays, after hearing the remarks made(in all innocence) on the boys selected for the female characters, and sometimes after reading the critiques on their acting in the newspapers, I believe that many beside the writer, who know the miseries which lurk behind the scenes of our great schools, must have felt a painful misgiving lest the devil should turn to his own purposes all this clever and graceful impersonation.

But our head-masters have appeared to be blind to this danger. Surely it is impossible now for them to ignore its existence, or to allow its continuance.

(JIM MOVES AWAY)

DON — Stella?

JIM — **STELLA THE STAR OF THE STRAND**

DON — Parading about in drag

JIM — Mr Straight

STRAIGHT — Well but he calls himself Stella. What a horrible offence. I am not permitted to call Mr Boulton to tell you how the name originated, but at Scarborough, in Essex, all over the country wherever this young man assumed female characters in plays, you heard of him as being the star of the evening.

DONALD — **DRAG**

(DONALD GETS ON THE BED AS THE JUSTICE)

JUSTICE(D) — And then there is the use of the term "drag"

PROSECUTOR(J) — It is a slang phrase,milord, employed in certain circles to mean men wearing women's clothes.

JUSTICE — Really. I myself have always understood the term to mean a four wheeled vehicle.

JIM — A four wheeled vehicle: he had them rolling in the aisles with that one!

DONALD — He'd never heard the word drag

JIM — Not like you dear, eh? Drag Queen of the south coast you.

DONALD — You love all this don't you? A laugh a minute. Another fucking chance to take the piss or get pissed.

JIM — Lighten up

DONALD — Stop fucking drinking

JIM — Yes sir wife sir…..

DONALD — I never said I'd be your wife

JIM — Sorry what was it? Boy was it? Partner, now there's a word to conjure with……..Partner in crime……

DONALD — Oh fuck off.

JIM — OK Don't get your knickers in a twist. The Lord Chief Justice. Your turn

(JIM STANDS ON THE BED)

JIM — **MRS BOULTON**

MRS BOULTON(D) — My name is Mary Ann Sarah Boulton. I am the mother of the defendant, Ernest Boulton.

JUSTICE — Proceed

MRS BOULTON — Your honour my son is a perfectly normal young man whose downfall has merely been a passion for the theatre. Before he could well speak he was fond of dressing up. He has displayed an extraordinary taste for acting female parts from early on in his life. Indeed his earliest triumph was to escape detection when he served supper to his own grandmother disguised as a maid. My Mama did not recognise him in the least.

JUSTICE — Stick to the point madam.

MRS BOULTON — The point sir is that we encouraged him in these theatricals

And although naturally we did not desire that as a grown man he should go in to the theatre, we could not bring ourselves to forbid it.

JUSTICE — And you approved of his friendship with Lord Arthur Clinton.

MRS BOULTON — We welcomed it sir. Lord Arthur is a distinguished gentlemen and we are honoured to have him as a family friend.

JUSTICE — Did your son live with Lord Arthur Clinton, Mrs Boulton.

MRS BOULTON — No sir, he visited him. And Lord Arthur visited us. He was very generous. On Ernest's coming of age he bought him a case of the finest champagne.

JUSTICE — Who paid for the dresses?

MRS BOULTON — I..well....

JUSTICE — The noble Lord?

MRS BOULTON — We may have paid for some of them sir, and then there were the receipts from the plays….

JUSTICE — Lord Arthur may have provided some of them.

MRS BOULTON — I had nothing to do with the finances, my lord.

JUSTICE — Thank you madam.

MRS BOULTON — I would just like to say sir that Ernest has been a most dutiful and affectionate son to me. The only fault he ever had was a love of admiration which has been fed by the gross flattery of some very foolish people.

JUSTICE — Thank you for coming here today Mrs Boulton.

MRS BOULTON — I am his mother sir. I stand by my son. I will always stand by my son.

JIM — Did she say that?

DONALD What?

JIM Did she say I am his mother I will stand by him?

DONALD I think so. It might have been implied.

JIM (MOCKING) It might have been implied

(JIM GETS OFF THE BED)

JIM **THE MEDICAL EXAMINATION**

(DON GETS UP ON THE BED)

JUSTICE(DON) Doctor James Thomas Paul . You are Divisional Surgeon to E Division of the Metropolitan Police

DR PAUL (JIM) I am, sir.

JUSTICE You examined the prisoners Boulton and Park

DR PAUL I was asked to examine the prisoners for the purpose of ascertaining their sex my lord but…..

JUSTICE Proceed

DR PAUL I wished to ascertain something more.

JUSTICE Indeed.

DR PAUL I told them to strip, which they did. Both had on "tights" or drawers, over white stockings. I found that they were both men.

JUSTICE Really

DR PAUL Examining them closely I found the anus much dilated and the muscles readily opened. These appearances were undoubtedly caused by the insertion of a foreign body…..

JUSTICE Go on.

DR PAUL They were attributable to the fact of them having frequent unnatural connexions. In addition, the other private parts of Boulton were of an inordinate size…..

(PAUSE)

DR PAUL Great big knob and hairy bollocks sir.

DONALD Jim…

DR PAUL This is often occasioned by improper connexion, sir I do not in my practice ever remember to have seen such an appearance of the anus as those the two prisoners presented.

(JIM GETS UP ON THE BED AND PUSHES DONALD OFF)

JUSTICE(JIM) Dr Le Gros Clark You are appearing for the Defence.

CLARK(DON) I am, sir.

JUSTICE Yes. Continue

CLARK I have been a surgeon sir at St Thomas Hospital for 27 years. I examined the prisoners and found no trace of venereal disease whatever, perceived no unnatural extension, dilation or any symptom to indicate that unnatural intercourse had taken place.

(SILENCE)

CLARK However the perpetration of unnatural crimes is of so uncommon occurrence that no hospital surgeon can speak with certainty about them.

(SILENCE)

JUSTICE So your diagnosis is provisional.

CLARK	You could put it in that way sir.
JUSTICE	It could all be arse about face?
DONALD	For fucks sake Jim
JUSTICE	Balls to your partner arse against the wall
DONALD	Don't be so fuckin stupid
JIM	If you've never been fucked on a Saturday night you've never been fucked at all
DONALD	You know he would never have said that.
JIM	That's the whole fucking point.
DONALD	Then why say it?
JIM	You tell me.
DONALD	The medical examination was like fucking rape.
JIM	Yea yea.
DONALD	The first time in British history that sort of homophobic behaviour was legitimised
JIM	Oh get off your fucking high horse
DONALD	It's our history Jim.
JIM	It's not mine.
DONALD	Oh great. Finished with being a gay boy have we?,.
JIM	Who says I'm a gay boy?
DONALD	Well thanks for telling me now we're married

JIM Oh I'm gay lover, and I'm a banker who doesn't give a shit about how the South Sea Bubble burst and a catholic who don't give a toss about the Spanish Inquisition. Satisfied?

(DONALD TURNS AWAY)

JIM I don't want to be lectured Don. Not by you, not by anybody. Not about *my* past, *my* present or *my* future.

DONALD Our past.

JIM Whatever

DONALD Oh let's just stop this shall we.

(DONALD TURNS UPSTAGE)

JIM No. I didn't say I wanted to stop.

DONALD With you like this? What's the fucking point?

JIM Like what?

(SILENCE)

JIM We've come this far. We've got to work this one out.

DONALD Us you mean or the play?

(DONALD SULKS)

JIM What's next?

DONALD Fuck knows.

JIM It's your story

DONALD It's our fucking story.

JIM You did the work, you did the research. I agreed to help you tell the story.

(SILENCE)

JIM	Let's finish it at least.
DONALD	That was about it. There's just the end of the trial.
JIM	Sure?
DONALD	Yes.
	(SILENCE)
DONALD	I'm sure.
JIM	How were we going to do it.?
	(DONALD SHRUGS)
JIM	Remind me how we were going to act it.
DONALD	We were going to make love while we spoke the judges summing up
JIM	Very post modern.
DONALD	Forget it.
.JIM	No okay. Okay. I'll be the judge
	(JIM GETS UP ON THE BED)
DONALD	It's the Attorney General first
	(JIM GETS DOWN AGAIN)
	(DONALD CLEARS HIS THROAT)
ATTORNEY GENERAL (DON)	Perhaps I am not going too far when I say that you and I and all of us would experience a sensation of relief if we could come to the conclusion that the popular apprehension of these …events, was unfounded but when the language of passionate love is addressed by a man to another man it becomes the language of lust.

JUSTICE(JIM) The closing remarks of His Honour Lord Chief Justice Alfred Skunk..

(DONALD GLARES)

JIM I don't know what he was called.

(DURING THE FOLLOWING SPEECH, DONALD KISSES AND FONDLES THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE (OR IS IT JIM?) WHO GETS INCREASINGLY ANGRY)

JUSTICE(JIM) The jury have to decide whether evidence of the personal relations between these men show that they have combined together to commit the offence of sodomy among themselves. However repulsive, offensive and objectionable, their cross dressing alone does not prove them guilty of conspiracy to solicit. Where such cross dressing is done even for frolic, even for the amusement of the individual at the expense of public decency, it ought to be subject to the most severe punishments of flogging and the treadmill.

What inferences are we to draw from men unsexing themselves, adopting the garb and appearance of women, painting and powdering themselves, and tricking themselves out in tawdry tinsel finery, assuming not only the appearance of women to whose sex they do not belong, but of fallen women of the lowest description, what in euphemistic language are called gay women but what you and I should call prostitutes of the street

Doubts remain about the letters. Park's letters to the man she describes as her "brother-in-law" in particular. "My dearest Arthur" addressed to a man considerably older than he and of much higher rank and Boulton's use of the word

"wretch" to a man of such distinguished rank is stranger still.

(JIM GLARES AT DONALD WHO STOPS)

However although these gentlemen's conduct has been as extraordinary as one ever heard of in almost all the extraordinary scandals that from time to time have arisen, the evidence appears wanting in proof of the purpose which is alleged in this indictment.

Gentlemen of the Jury……

(PAUSE)

Gentlemen of the Jury……. Don?

DONALD Don what?

JIM What now

DONALD Fuck knows

JIM Suit yourself.

JIM **THE BIG FINISH**

(JIM TAKES A BIG BREATH)

JIM Not guilty. They got off

DONALD Great.

JIM Thanks. Well you got your happy ending.

DONALD It wasn't a happy ending.

JIM You told me they were set free.

DONALD That wasn't the end

JIM Well tell us Mr Fucking History Man what is the end?

DONALD Give me a chance.

(JIM HOLDS HIS HANDS UP)

DONALD Fanny and Stella got off at the trial.

JIM Oh dear. How sad.

(NO RESPONSE)

DONALD There was something I didn't tell you.

JIM Okay

DONALD To avoid his trial…. Arthur killed himself.

JIM Fuck

DONALD Scarlet Fever was the official cause of death. Maybe he did die in his bed. But he killed himself that's for sure.

JIM Fuck.

DONALD His last recorded words:

(DONALD SEARCHES THROUGH A BOOK UNTIL HE FINDS THEM AND GIVES THEM TO JIM)

JIM (READING) I was guilty only of the foolish continuance of the personation of theatrical characters which arose from a simple frolic in which I permitted myself to become an actor.

DONALD It's not just about Arthur's death

JIM No.

DONALD Fanny and Stella got off by denying their love. By lying about the nature of their love.

JIM So, wouldn't you?

DONALD Making us invisible.

JIM Hang on, how can you say that? They didn't speak at the trial. You told me. Fanny and Stella didn't say a word.

DONALD Their lawyers then.

JIM What else were they to do? You don't even know they were fucking each other.

DONALD Of course they fucking were.

JIM You don't know, like always, you just assume. Every bugger fucks but us.

DONALD You said it

JIM I don't want a cock in a frock

DONALD You don't want a cock full stop

JIM I don't want a man pretending to be a woman

DONALD I think that's exactly what you want.

(HE PICKS UP THE DRESS AND TAUNTS JIM)

DONALD But you are not a man, are you darling? You can't do me any harm can you? Do tell me that love, and I shall be happy; otherwise I should tear myself from your arms and run screaming from this place!

JIM Fuck off

DONALD I didn't mean

(HE PUSHES DONALD ROUGHLY AWAY)

JIM Is what this is all about? Sort out all Jim's guilt in one foul swoop. Pretend you're a girlie and it will all just go away! Well nought out of ten for the amateur psychology.

DONALD And what would you know about psychology?

JIM You married me

DONALD I must have been fucking mad

JIM That make's two of us

DONALD You can't even kiss me properly any more

JIM Fucking hell Don, always the same fucking tune

DONALD You're the man I love

JIM Then you can stop now then can't you. You can just stop now.

DONALD I don't want to stop. I cant……

(SILENCE)

JIM Its not you. You know it's not you. This whole life is so shameful, so sordid, so disgusting, sometimes I can't deal with the shame.

DONALD You promised me you'd try. Tell me again you'll try.

(SILENCE)

JIM Want to forget the look on my mother's face.
Don't want to forget.
Want her to hold me close again

Never want to be held.
Ever again
I've no right
She's no right
Want to lose myself in her
Already lost
Can't turn back the clock
Must move on
Cant move on
Can't forget her face.
Can't deal with the shame.

DONALD Come here

JIM Why did you marry me?

DONALD So I wouldn't lose you…

JIM And then you put a fucking dress on.

DONALD I thought it might turn you on
Anything to turn you on
To make you forget.

JIM You said.

DONALD Night after night just wanting you to touch me. I thought it would get better Jim.

JIM So did I.

DONALD Civil Partnership. None of it works. It's just playing, just a game, nothing changes. It's all pretend.

JIM It's not pretend

DONALD How many guys you see kissing in the street,
putting their arms round each other doing all the things the straights do? Just being ordinary, able to let go

JIM Thought you wanted to be different?

DONALD They still hate us

JIM No one hates us. We hate ourselves.

DONALD They fucking hang you in Iran

JIM This is not Iran

DONALD Stab you in Burnley

JIM They stab anyone in Burnley.

(DONALD AND JIM TOGETHER)

DONALD And us. What about us?

JIM We're going out. Put your frock on.

DONALD I don't want to put me fucking frock on!

JIM Go on. Live a little

DONALD I only put the frock on for you.

JIM You not just a bit attracted, silk on the skin. Laced tightly up……..

(HE TOUCHES DONALD)

DONALD Okay okay just a bit but that's not what this is about.

JIM Let's make this a feel good story.

DONALD Could do with a bit of that.

JIM Hand in hand we'll walk down the Strand

DONALD We're going out on the street, yes? Not the gay village. Not in the dark. The street. Lord Arthur, you'd make a good fucking Lord you.

JIM One day boy

DONAL:D .And me, tonight I'm Stella. Star of the fucking Strand.

JIM Without the frock

DONALD No frock.

JIM But first we're going to see my mum

DONALD Your mum s your mum, she doesn't have to us shoved in her face

JIM She does

DONALD Not tonight Jim. Let's stay in. Just you and me.

JIM Give me a kiss.

DONALD And the rest?

(THEY MOVE EITHER SIDE OF THE BED AND QUICKLY STRIP NAKED WATCHING EACH OTHER)

(THEY JUMP INTO BED UNDER THE COVER AND START KISSING)

(THEY CLOCK THE AUDIENCE)

JIM Fuck

DONALD They're still here.

JIM Give them a bit of history, bit of culture, they'll not be bothered about a bit of the other, it's what some of them have come for.

DONALD The last bit. The Justice's summing up: the bit we missed out.

JIM Fuck me you've got Socrates in.

DONALD Told you I would.

JIM (TO THE AUDIENCE) Oh and this is word for word. We've still not changed anything for dramatic effect.

(THEY PROPS THEMSELVES UP IN BED WITH THEIR ARMS ROUND EACH OTHER)

JIM **THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE OF ENGLAND**

DONALD And then in the defendants' correspondence there are allusions to Greek love.

JIM We know that love of this description has been associated with the name and with the memory of the greatest philosopher of antiquity,

DONALD but the learned, the wise, and the good in every age have come to the belief that the sentiment

JIM which undoubtedly Socrates entertained for the youths with whom he delighted to associate,

DONALD was one of a spiritual and ethereal character in which no sensual desire was mixed.

JIM The soul of that great philosopher who in all his aspirations loved beauty in its purity

DONALD and virtue in its holiness

JIM was never contaminated and soiled by the sensuality of gross

DONALD and unnatural

JIM and loathsome

DONALD AND JIM lust.

(A PASSIONATE KISS)

JIM What happened to Stella?

DONALD Found something on the web. She appeared at the Broadway Theatre in New York . December 1873 In her frock

LIGHTS DOWN

THE END